Tax Evasion by private banking financial companies

*29. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General has revealed that more than 1,500 private banking financial companies are outside the tax net and are allegedly involved in tax evasion;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to make filing annual financial returns mandatory for the non-banking private companies; and

(c) what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) The C & AG in their Report No. 12 A of 2002 presented to Parliament on 15th March, 2002, have included the results of the Review on Private Banking Companies and Non Banking Fiancial Companies. As per this report, in the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and West Bengal, 12,210 (or 66%) of the 18,435 NBFCs identified by Audit were not in the tax net. This Report of C & AG is being examined in the CBDT for suitable action.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir.Government has already amended Sub-section (1) of Section 139 w.e.f. 1.4.2001. As per these amended provisions, every company shall, on or before the due date, furnish a return of verified income.

Appointment of Consultants by SBI for HRD

*30. SHRIMATI VENGA GEETHA : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Bank of India plans to appoint persons to deploy them in areas in which the bank wants to focus *i.e.* in marketing like market insurance products;

(b) whether bank's 40 per cent of work force has become redudant on account of computerisation in the country;

(c) whether bank proposes to appoint consultant for human resource development for optimum utilization of work force; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) State Bank of India has reported that it does not have any plan to appoint persons for marketing insurance products. However, with a view to improve customer base, bank may deploy appropriate number of officers, clerical staff, etc. drawn from branches/offices for marketing bank's products in the personal segments like housing loans, consumer loans, ATM cards as well as products of their non-banking subsidiaries like mutual funds, bank assurance, etc.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Hike in Petroleum Products

*31. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times the prices of petroleum products/LPG have been increased during the last two years, year-wise; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to keep the prices under control ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Consumer prices of petrol, diesel, PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG were increased only once during 2000-01 with effect from 30th September 2000. During the year 2001-02, while no increase was effected in the prices of petrol and diesel, the prices of PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG were increased only once, with effect from 1st March, 2002.

However, during the year 2000-01, the prices of PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG were reduced once, with effect from 22nd November 2000. Further, during the year 2001-02, the prices of domestic LPG were reduced once, with effect from 17th March 2002, and those of petrol and diesel were reduced twice, with effect from 12th January, 2002 and 1st March, 2002.

(b) With the dismantling of the Administered Pricing mechanism (APM) effective from 1st April 2002, the prices of all petroleum products, except for PDS